

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 127415
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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 127415

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GR, CY, TU

SUBJECT: CLIFFORD MEETING WITH GREEK AMBASSADOR
ALEXANDRAKIS

1. GREEK AMBASSADOR ALEXANDRAKIS, AT HIS REQUEST, MET FOR ONE HOUR WITH CLARK CLIFFORD MAY 31. DISCUSSION RANGED OVER EXISTING PROBLEMS IN EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN AS WELL AS FUTURE DIRECTION OF US POLICY.

2. CONVERSATION BEGAN WITH SERIES OF QUESTIONS FROM ALEXANDRAKIS. GREEK GOVERNMENT, HE SAID, WAS WORRIED AND CONCERNED ABOUT DIRECTION OF US POLICY. WHAT WERE CURRENT US INTENTIONS? HAD ADMINISTRATION DECIDED THAT ITS
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 127415

SECURITY RELATIONSHIP WITH TURKEY TOOK PRECEDENCE OVER OTHER MATTERS? GREEKS HAD DRAWN THIS CONCLUSION WHEN ADMINISTRATION REQUESTED THAT TURKISH EMBARGO BE RELAXED TO PERMIT COMPLETION OF SALE OF 40 MORE F-4S TO TURKEY. WOULD US CONSIDER FUTURE ASSISTANCE TO TURKEY BASED ON A SERIES OF CRITERIA, RATHER THAN CYPRUS LINKAGE ALONE? HAD DIRECT LINKAGE BETWEEN CYPRUS AND US-TURKISH SECURITY RELATIONSHIP

BEEN BROKEN OR RELAXED IN SOME WAY?

3. CLIFFORD RESPONDED TO THESE GENERALIZED GREEK CONCERNS WITH A PRESENTATION WHICH MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

(A) PRESIDENT CARTER HAD ASKED HIM TO WORK ON EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN PROBLEMS, AND HE INTENDED TO REMAIN IN PICTURE UNTIL THESE PROBLEMS WERE RESOLVED.

(B) THE US WAS DETERMINED TO DO WHAT IT COULD TO BRING ABOUT A SATISFACTORY CYPRUS SETTLEMENT. IT ALSO WISHED TO HELP GREECE AND TURKEY RESOLVE THEIR DIFFICULT BILATERAL PROBLEMS. IN SO DOING, WE WERE BOUND SOMETIMES TO ADOPT POSITIONS THAT DID NOT PLEASE TURKEY. WE WOULD ALSO ON OCCASION ADOPT POSITIONS THAT GREECE WOULD NOT LIKE. THIS IN ITSELF WOULD NOT DETER US FROM CONTINUING ON A COURSE WE THOUGHT CORRECT.

(C) SOLUTIONS TO AREA PROBLEMS COULD NOT BE REACHED WITHOUT THE COOPERATION AND GOOD-WILL OF GREECE AND TURKEY. THE BASIC DECISIONS THAT HAD TO BE MADE IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN WERE NOT OURS. A SOLUTION IN THE AEGEAN COULD ONLY BE REACHED IF GREECE AND TURKEY COMPROMISED THEIR DIFFERENCES. OUR ASSISTANCE COULD GO NO FURTHER THAN ASSISTING THE PARTIES FIND PROCEDURES THROUGH WHICH DIFFERENCES MIGHT BE RECONCILED. ON CYPRUS, IT WAS CLEAR THAT IF MATTERS WERE LEFT TO THE TWO COMMUNITIES ON THE ISLAND NO SETTLEMENT COULD BE ACHIEVED QUICKLY. CONCESSIONS FROM TURKEY WERE ESSENTIAL. AT SOME POINT IN THE

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 127415

FUTURE GREATER INVOLVEMENT BY GREECE WOULD ALSO BE NECESSARY.

(D) WE WERE HOPEFUL THAT SOMETHING POSITIVE COULD BE ACHIEVED FOLLOWING THE TURKISH ELECTIONS. WE MUST NOW WAIT TO SEE WHAT HAPPENS ON JUNE 5 AND THEN ALLOW THE TURKS SOME ADDITIONAL TIME TO FORM A NEW CABINET. AT THAT POINT, WE WOULD RESUME DISCUSSIONS WITH THE PARTIES. WHAT FORM THIS WOULD TAKE WAS NOT CERTAIN. CLIFFORD OBSERVED THAT AT PRESENT HE WOULD NOT BE PARTICULARLY WELCOME IN ANKARA. EVEN IF THIS REMAINED THE CASE AFTER THE TURKISH ELECTIONS, THE US WOULD FIND SOME WAY TO MAINTAIN CONTACTS WITH THE TURKS, GREEKS AND THE TWO CYPRIOT COMMUNITIES, AND THAT OUT OF THESE CONTACTS THE OUTLINES OF A SOLUTION WOULD BEGIN TO EMERGE. THIS PROCESS WOULD TAKE TIME, AND THE UNDERSTANDING AND COOPERATION OF ANKARA AND ATHENS WERE REQUIRED DURING THIS PERIOD.

(E) CLIFFORD SAID HE HOPED THAT GREECE AND TURKEY WOULD

BOTH COME TO RECOGNIZE THAT THE SOVIET UNION AND NOT EACH OTHER POSED THE GREATER EXTERNAL DANGER, AND THIS IN TURN WOULD LEAD THE TWO TO COMPROMISE THEIR DIFFERENCES AND RETURN TO THE ALLIANCE.

4. ALEXANDRAKIS EXPRESSED SOME DISSATISFACTION WITH THIS

RESPONSE AND NOTED THAT TALK ABOUT THE ALLIANCE AND THE COMMON DANGER FROM THE USSR IGNORED THE MORE IMMEDIATE THREAT POSED TO GREECE BY TURKEY. IT ALSO TENDED TO OBSCURE THE FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES WHICH WERE AT THE CORE OF THE CYPRUS PROBLEM. GREECE WOULD NEVER ACCEPT THE AGGRESSION WHICH HAD OCCURRED IN CYPRUS AND SAID THAT WHAT WE ARE NOW DEALING WITH IS A CIVIL WAR WITHIN NATO.

5. CLIFFORD EXPLAINED THAT THE NATO ALLIANCE WAS NEVER DESIGNED TO SETTLE FAMILY DISPUTES. IT WAS ILL EQUIPPED
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PAGE 04 STATE 127415

TO DEAL WITH A QUARREL BETWEEN TURKEY AND GREECE. US INTERESTS IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN TOUCHED GREECE, TURKEY AND CYPRUS. IT WAS OUR HOPE THAT WE WOULD NOT HAVE TO MAKE A CHOICE BETWEEN SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS AND A SOLUTION OF THE CYPRUS ISSUE. IN OUR VIEW, 1977 WAS THE YEAR FOR ACTION ON BOTH FRONTS. WE WOULD WORK FOR PROGRESS ON CYPRUS THIS YEAR. WE ALSO HOPED THAT GREECE AND TURKEY WILL SETTLE THEIR AEGEAN AND OTHER BILATERAL PROBLEMS DURING 1977. CLIFFORD CONCLUDED THE CONVERSATION ON AN OPTIMISTIC NOTE, REITERATING HIS BELIEF THAT GOOD-WILL AND A READINESS TO SETTLE THE CYPRUS AND AEGEAN QUESTIONS APPEARED TO EXIST IN ATHENS AND NICOSIA AND HE HOPED IN ANKARA AS WELL. IF THIS WERE SO, WE WOULD CONTINUE TO WORK TO MAXIMIZE WHATEVER OPPORTUNITIES EXISTED. VANCE

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